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From Privileged to Thwarted Stakeholders - Polish Migrants' Perceptions of the Scottish Independence Referendum 2014 and the UK General Election in 2015.

Introduction

In this¹ article we explore the experiences of Polish migrants in Scotland in the context of being enfranchised during the Scottish Independence Referendum in 2014 to then being disenfranchised from the General Election during the General Election of 2015. This context offered us the opportunity for a temporally specific analysis of citizenship (Clarke et al 2014: 10 & 14), or more accurately of EU 'political rights' from the perspective of Polish migrants resident in Scotland at this time. In the article, we examine what Soysal refers to as 'the new opportunities for social mobilisation and advancing demands within and beyond national boundaries' in the context of EU-free movement within multi-level polities (1996: 19). The focus of this article is on how Polish migrants in Scotland perceive and experience the electoral rules established by the Maastricht Treaty that determine the relationship between alien suffrage and national and sub-national political rights. It is these political rights that determine the extent to which EU citizens resident in a member state that is not their country of citizenship can vote in sub-national (local, municipal, European Parliament and sub-national referenda) and national level (General) elections and national level referenda (Guild 2004: 46). This article was written before the UK's EU Referendum took place on 23 June 2016.

Following López-Guerra, the article examines the 'franchise capacity' (2014: 6) of Polish migrant residents in Scotland at the time. López-Guerra defines franchise capacity as the

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ability to experience the benefits of enfranchisement and the harms of disenfranchisement, that is, ‘the moral and rational faculty to value the position of being a voter, and thus to be hurt by exclusion’ (ibid). Our focus is on Polish migrants’ perspectives on the tensions that arise from shifting membership boundaries which result in them being included in the Demos (the People of Scotland, during the Referendum) but not included in the Demos of the People of the UK (for the General Election). These issues will be examined through qualitative research that focuses on our participants’ perceptions and experiences of their ‘engagement with the polity’ (Balibar 2004). We argue that it is through examining our participants’ intentions, justifications and frustrations with regard to their enfranchisement and disenfranchisement in the context of these national and sub-national political events that we can observe their reflections on the contradictory institutional processes of citizenship in Scotland, in the UK and in the EU. By examining migrants’ experiences, reflections and perceptions on the blurred boundaries and formations of citizenships in this context, this article offers greater understanding of the transformation of traditional state-centric concepts of citizenship rights into broader overlapping circles of membership affiliations. In this context our participants’ reflections articulate the contradictions of citizenship as advocated by Étienne Balibar (2001; 2004). Thus, following Balibar, citizenship is viewed in broader terms, as not simply a legal status bestowed by the state, but also as being enacted and created through individuals and groups engagement with the polity (Balibar 2004). However, that being said, as well as approaching citizenship in terms of questions of process and access; citizenships are also fraught with contradictions. Following Balibar, our participants experiences of being buffeted by ‘the contradiction between the opposite movements of inclusion and exclusion’ and the ‘reduplication of external borders in the form of “internal borders”.’ (Balibar 2004: x). Our main contribution in the article is, following Balibar, to examine the unfinished character of citizenships, that is, the imperfect (Balibar 2001: 211),

incomplete and incompleteable (Balibar 2004: 182) associated with the ‘essential incompleteness’ of ‘the people’ as a body politic (Balibar 2015: 32). Through our empirical research we examine our participants’ perceptions and experiences of what Balibar calls ‘the gray area’ where ‘individuals are neither completely included nor completely excluded (Balibar 2015: 73) from the community of citizens. The focus of the article is on migrants as ‘political actors’ (Driver and Garapich 2012) in this particular context. Thus, a secondary contribution of the paper is to give a voice, through our qualitative research, to migrants themselves ‘amidst the fierce debate about whether, and how, to restrict immigration’ (Ford and Grove-White 2015) in the UK.

The article consists of three parts, before we get to part one, which examines the political rights associated with EU citizenship, we will briefly comment on our methodology. Part two explores our participant’s experiences of the inconsistencies, inclusions and exclusions during the Independence Referendum and the General Election. Part three explores Polish migrants’ perceptions with regards to the limitations of current political rights for EU free-movers; their sense of having a stake in Scotland (and the UK); their desire for EU migrants to be more assertive to counter some of the anti-migration discourse during the General Election; and for some, their plans to apply for British citizenship as a means to a variety of ends (maintaining choice in the context of UK and EU membership insecurity and gaining full political rights in their adopted country).

Methodology

The reason we have chosen to focus on Poles is they are a significant population in the UK, Poles are the largest European minority group in England and Wales (579,121, at the 2011

census); however, in Scotland they are the largest foreign-born minority group, at 55,231 they are approximately 10% of population of Scotland (5,327,700 in 2014) and as such a significant proportion of the electorate for the Scottish Independence Referendum.

The project included three stages, an online survey, individual interviews conducted before the Scottish Independence Referendum and a selection of follow-up individual interviews conducted before the General Election. All stages of the research design were interlinked, which means that the data and findings from the online survey inform development of interviews with Polish migrants and addressed the same research focus. Both the online survey and in particular the pre-Referendum interview questions focused on Polish migrants' political engagement and their attitudes to the Referendum. While the online survey questions focused on collecting descriptive information for example, on scale and forms of Polish migrant political participation; the interview questions focused on exploring their experiences and attitudes to towards political participation in general and in the Scottish Referendum, in particular. The exercise of linking the online survey questions with the interview questions was also considered as contributing towards validation of the process of data collection, whereby data collected from the online survey were cross-referenced with what was said during the interviews.

The online survey questionnaire (we received 250 completed surveys) was distributed through diverse channels including Polish community organisations, Polish businesses and Polish online networks across Scotland. For the purpose of this study, the database of Polish community organisations and business was compiled based on the result of internet searches. The community organisations and business were identified as relevant if one of their remit concerns Polish culture, history or they offered services in Polish language. Despite the online survey providing quantitative data, due to limitations of the sample frame the analysis of this quantitative data did not include statistical analysis. Instead, the aim of the online

survey was to provide general and contextual information on forms of political participation and attitudes to Scotland Independence among Polish migrants in Scotland. The survey was followed up by 24 individual in-depth interviews with Polish Adults, (12 in Glasgow and 12 in Edinburgh), that were eligible to vote in the Scottish Independence Referendum. Both cities, Glasgow and Edinburgh, were selected for this study as according to the National Population Census in 2011 they experienced the highest concentration of Polish migrants living in those areas, with 13,000 Polish migrants living in Edinburgh and 8,305 of Poles living in Glasgow. Individual Polish migrants were selected from volunteers who expressed their interest in online survey in taking part in the follow up interview . These interviews were conducted between May and June 2014 in the run-up to the Independence Referendum (which took place on the 18th September 2014). The interviews focus on Polish migrants experiences and attitudes towards political enagagement but also their opinions on their participation in the Independence Referendum. Subsequent to this, in April 2015 (in the run-up to the General Election), we conducted eight follow-up interviews with a selection of our original participants during April 2015. At this point, the interviews focused on Polish migrants attitudes and opinions on their enfrinchesement in the Independence Referendum and disfranchisement in the general election. For the interview data, pseudonyms were used from the point of data collection onwards to ensure the data remains confidential and anonymous. However, respondents age, place of living and job title were kept to provide contextual information , including their labour market position in the UK. A thematic analysis of the interview transcript was undertaken using a technique advocated by Boyatzis (1998). Initially, an overview thematic grid was produced to identify and collate migrants' views on the topics discussed. Relevant sections of the transcripts were assigned appropriate thematic codes and refined sub-categories emerged. This article will focus on our interview

data, we will include survey questionnaire data occasionally to provide context for participants' narratives.

Part 1: EU migrant electoral rights

The EU is the largest group of countries with a specific franchise for citizens of other EU member states. EU citizenship has already been described as a 'special form' of 'quasi' citizenship (Castles & Davidson 2000: 98). In 1993 the introduction of the legal concept of 'citizenship' into the EC Treaty of Maastricht created for the first time limited political participation rights for citizens of the European Union based on their residence and their common status as citizens of the Union (Day and Shaw 2002: 183). EU citizens defined as the nationals of the Member States (Article 17 EC) have rights to vote in and stand in local elections and European Parliamentary elections when resident in a member state other than the one in which they hold citizenship (Bauböck 1994: 219, Day and Shaw 2002: 183). Day and Shaw suggest that these species of migrants' rights enact the political principle of civic inclusion sometimes termed 'alien suffrage' (2002: 184). Day and Shaw also indicate that the EU motivation behind establishing sub-national electoral rights for EU migrants was to:

foster a deeper sense of involvement on the part of the EU migrant with the host state and with certain aspects of its political culture, and to limit the prejudice in terms of loss of political rights which the migrant may suffer as a result of moving away from her home state.

(2002: 184).

As early as 1997, the European Commission claimed that the benefits of the electoral rights granted under the Maastricht Treaty the EC treaty to resident non-national EU citizens would be precisely in terms of 'a greater integration' of Union citizens in their host member states (Shaw 2007: 69). However, Day and Shaw suggest that the electoral rights enjoyed by EU migrant resident in other EU member states are not seen by their intended beneficiaries as being particularly useful in terms of countering the dislocating effects of migration or offering alternative and plural foci of political identification via participation in the host polity (2002: 185). Despite these potential positive implications of the electoral rights enjoyed by EU migrant resident in other EU member states, the rate of participation in Local Elections and European Parliament elections is low and there is also rather high level of ignorance about the EU electoral rights on the part of their intended beneficiaries (Shaw 2007: 125). Furthermore, the involvement of EU migrants as voters and candidates in the electoral life of the host polities also remains marginal in almost all regions of almost all EU Member States (Shaw 2007: 125, Perchinig 2006: 70, European Commission 2010). In contrast, the Scottish Independence Referendum had an extremely high rate of participation, with a turnout of 84.5% overall. Our survey indicates that the Referendum was very salient for our participants (84% of our 250 survey participants stated that intended to vote in the Scottish Independence Referendum).

In the Scottish context, EU migrants could be perceived as aliens, however, they only partially suffer from the lack of formal citizenship status (and voting rights) that renders most non-EU (third country) aliens politically disenfranchised (Bosniak 2008: 10). As well as having Local Election and European Parliament election rights, EU resident migrants in the UK also have electoral rights in the devolved political institutions in 'region nations' of Scotland Wales and Northern Ireland (Shaw 2007: 275). Following from that, EU citizens are

able to vote in regionally based Referendums as enshrined in the Local Government Elections Regulations 1995. These electoral rights are possible because the regional elections and referenda are governed within a framework analogous to local elections for the purpose of the franchise and so the right to vote flows naturally from that conclusion (Shaw 2007: 275, Ziegler 2014: 3). However, some commentators have argued that in fact the Scottish Independence franchise should not have followed the criteria deployed for political participation in sub-national elections precisely because ‘independence Referendums share the fundamental and long-term characteristics of national elections’ (Ziegler 2014: 3, Kostakopoulou 2014: 1). For that reason, resident Polish migrants’ participation in this particular Referendum is unlike participation in other sub-national elections because of potential social, political and economic significance for the whole of the United Kingdom (if the outcome had been ‘yes’ and not ‘no’ for Independence). Those EU migrants residents in Scotland who participated in the Referendum could however be described as having lived through and experienced what Bauböck calls ‘citizenship boundaries’ becoming even more blurred (2014 : 19) and inconsistent through the temporary (rather than ‘graded’) disaggregation associated with their enfranchisement to vote in the Independence Referendum. The inclusion of EU resident migrants in the Referendum exposed them to what some of our participants perceived to be temporary enhanced political rights which was the context from whence they began to constitute their citizenship through justifying their participation in the Referendum through articulating the contribution they make and the stake they have in Scotland (see part three, below). It is the shift between being enfranchised and being part of the electorate during the Independence Referendum to then being disenfranchised during the General Election that we can observe the tension between the different formations and composition of membership of the political community. What we expose for analysis here is what Balibar refers to as ‘the open and unfinished character’ of

Citizenship (2004: xi) which Clarke et al refer to as a practice and a process, rather than a stable state (Clarke et al 2014:). The following section will examine Polish migrants experiences, responses and the tensions that emerged during the Referendum and then subsequently during the General Election.

Part two: From inclusion to exclusion – the inconsistent access to political participation

The Scottish Independence Referendum was a very salient event for Polish migrant residents in Scotland. For example, some of our participants expressed their elation at being invited to be a part of the historical event. For example, Marta told us that:

it was very special indeed. When my husband and I went to the polling station, it was an incredible feeling, casting the vote...I think the experience really united us not only with the rest of society, but with other national minority groups who could also vote. It was really good and positive to be able to feel like rightful citizens'

Marta, 28, Web Developer, Glasgow

A number of participants such as Marta regarded their enfranchisement in the Referendum as 'as a sign of honour, respect, and appreciation' (Komter 2005: 45). For Marta, and for other participants, see below, this resulted in her beginning to view herself as what she calls 'a rightful citizen', a term which has many connotations; including: being recognised, having rights, and of being equal to others and being respected by others. This sentiment was also articulated by Marek who indicated that being able to cast his vote in the Referendum: "...it makes me feel appreciated that Scots decided that because I live in this country I am eligible to take part in the Referendum." (Marek, 44, male, Psychotherapist Edinburgh). Another

participant (Anna) was just as enthusiastic about the Referendum: 'I feel that taking part in the Referendum is my privilege because I am not a citizen of this country. In Poland this is my duty, but here this is my privilege (Anna, 42, Language Teacher, Glasgow).

It is in the contrast between the constitutive experience of participants' perception of having been invited to be active participants during the Referendum that our participants appear to feel their subsequent disenfranchisement from and relative passivity during the General Election most keenly. Their perception of being downgraded from being active and enfranchised participants in the Referendum to becoming passive 'bystanders' and objects of political debates in the General Election which is the cause of much of their frustration. Participants such as Agata, expressed considerable frustration in terms of being 'back where they started', for example:

Yes of course I am not a citizen but I was able to take part in the Scottish Referendum...and we're now back where we started...that's why it so frustrating for us now because we have once felt that we can have an impact, that we could do things and we did. Now though, we're not able to anymore...'

Agata, Social Worker, 30, Edinburgh

Agata's narrative shows that the right of EU residents to vote in the Independence Referendum, followed by being disenfranchised from participating in the General Election relatively soon after, has led to significant frustrations around National or General Election electoral rules. For some participants these frustrations resulted in calls for the more flexible accommodation of EU migrant political rights outside of their country of citizenship(s). Similar to Agata, Marta, talked about the irrelevance of current UK citizenship regulations

and franchise of the UK General Election in the context of increasingly open borders in the EU and the need for citizenship laws to become more fluid and adaptable to the reality of the extent of migrations and mobilities:

If you consider citizenship as an institution and look at the country as a whole, then I agree that there should be rules and regulations in place. On the other hand, times are changing and what used to be a rule and was good at one time needs to be more flexible now, simply because more and more people travel, take up work elsewhere and move countries, so I think it is going to have to change, slowly, slowly, everywhere.

Marta, 28, Web Developer, Glasgow

Marta's narrative articulates a divergence between the formal arrangements of citizenship (legal citizenship status) and social change, especially increasing migration between and beyond EU member states, and the implications of this on the formation of citizenship. The inconsistencies in their electoral rights during the Referendum and the General Election also resulted in some participants reflecting upon the complexities and heterogeneity of their citizenship settings. For example, Jolanta described her experiences as follows:

I think that the EU has created something similar to the USA. We're citizens of the EU and that's the bottom line of what we're talking about. Who are we? We are citizens of the European Union, We're neither citizens of Poland, England nor Scotland; we're citizens of the EU. And that's what the EU has always intended to create, I think: open borders.

Jolanta, 34, Self-employed, Edinburgh

In describing the heterogeneity and complexities of her perceived citizenships, Jolanta refers to her overlapping memberships in Scotland, Poland and to the EU, which depicts both multiple memberships but also what Bauböck (2004) refers to as the blurred boundaries of citizenship(s). In some of our participants' narratives there is evidence of their aspiration for the development of a post-national variety of EU citizenship. Much of their impatience is driven by their perception of the inconsistencies of their political inclusions and exclusions in the context of the Referendum and the General Election. In a similar vein Franciszek calls for an enhanced new type of supra-national European citizenship, for example,

I mean a citizenship where you no longer talk about individual countries but about the European Union as a whole. I'm not talking about losing individuality and statehood of individual countries completely, but I think that people who have come here from other countries should have the possibility to vote here, just like they do in the European Parliament Elections. If they feel a part of a place and want to make decisions regarding the future of politics of the country, they should be able to vote...although a minimum period of residency should be considered.

Franciszek, 31, Architect, Glasgow

Despite participants such as Franciszek indicating the importance of EU citizenship in determining the rights of EU migrants, we also note, following on from Shaw (2007) some ignorance amongst our participants about EU political (especially voting) rights. That is, none of our participants demonstrated very much awareness that their political rights as migrants living outside of their state of citizenship as being established in Maastricht Treaty in 1993. An appreciation of the latter did not feature in any significant way in any of our participants'

interviews with regard to their articulations of their frustration, confusion and anger about their General Election disenfranchisement. Instead, we note that in several interviews participants attribute the reason for their disenfranchisement to the UK's anti-immigration ethos Which they contrasted with what they perceive to be Scotland's pro-migration ethos. Agata exhibits this particular mis-apprehension:

This Election is not just for Scotland but it's a General Election for the whole of the United Kingdom...I thought then that this is just another example of how friendly Scotland was towards its immigrants, so much more than the UK.

Agata, Social Worker, 30, Edinburgh

A number of our participants like Agata, equated their referendum enfranchisement to a 'progressive' Scotland and their subsequent General Election disenfranchisement as further evidence of England's (or the UK's) ambivalence towards migrants. Apart from these mis-apprehensions, what our data tells us is that rather than suffering from what Nancy Fraser (1997) calls 'unjust participatory privileges'; our participants (and other EU migrant groups resident in Scotland in 2014 and 2015) could more accurately be described as suffering from what they perceive to be inconsistent or contradictory participatory privileges. It is actually our participant's perceptions of the relative weights and significance of what they have been enfranchised and disenfranchised from participating in that has angered, perplexed and confused them. For example, Olek (who became a British citizen three years ago) told us:

During the Referendum, I felt very much uneasy about casting my vote...I felt then that this was a huge decision, one which would affect the future of this place so much,

and I was wondering whether it was actually right for me to vote...I didn't have that feeling in the General Election though.

Olek 34, Researcher, Edinburgh

On the other hand, Marta was left bewildered by the UK General Election disenfranchisement and has subsequently become suspicious about the motivations behind the Referendum enfranchisement:

I think that the fact that we could vote in the Referendum was really special...but, since we have not been given the same right now in the General Election, one might think: 'what does it mean that I can't vote now?Because we constitute such a large group, did they hope that we could contribute to a radical change and bring about independence? But now, in this important election, we have no right to vote, even though we live here.

(Marta, 28, Web Developer, Glasgow).

The frustrations with the disconnect between the subjective or horizontal concept of citizenship (more on this below) and the vertical or formal barriers to full political rights was expressed by our participants in terms of their partial inclusion and partial exclusion from fully participating in all aspects of political life in the UK, including voting in General Elections. Balibar has said that the 'founding moment of citizenship' is the practical confrontation with different modalities of exclusion (2004: 76). Our participants' experiences of both being fully enfranchised and then disenfranchised has positioned them in a liminal zone 'betwixt and between' (Turner 1977) 'citizenship' and 'quasi-citizenship'. That is between a range of objective (that is, enfranchised and disenfranchised in terms of electoral

participation rules), subjective (that is, feeling validated and privileged during the Referendum and also excluded and derogated during the General Election) and inter-subjective (that is, sense of belonging to and also a sense of being unwelcome in the adoptive country) dimensions. It is in this context our participants demonstrate the complexities and heterogeneity of their citizenship memberships in Poland, Scotland and also in the EU and how they, in this particular context are experienced as being disjointed. That is, the articulation of frustration, impatience and confusion in our participants' narratives also illustrates their attempts to understand, navigate and dispute the legal formal imposition of citizenship (in terms of sub-national, national and supra-national political rights) that do not accommodate to their experiences. These experiences correspond with Balibar's description of citizenship as always 'inparfaite' (unfinished), under construction in a variety of practices and processes, rather than being a 'stable state' (Clarke et al 2014: 14). We also suggest that in our participants' narratives we also see glimpses of an emergent desire for a new type of migrant politics in around the tensions (associated with voting rights) that EU mobility brings. For example, Marta, told us that the 'national minority groups' (by which she means EU migrant groups) should become more assertive, and become 'the driving force behind change', starting with countering the negative stereotypes of EU migrants in the run up to the General Election. Marta elaborates:

I think there should be more discussions like this...especially around the time of the General Election which we can't take part in...there are so many stereotypes about us circulating in the society and amongst ourselves which are harmful, but we could, if we wanted to, rise up and change this...we'd have to organise ourselves and see if there is anything that can be done.

Marta, 28, Web Developer, Glasgow

Kasia also thought that a ‘grassroots’ social movement was needed amongst the diverse migrant groups in the UK to counter the anti-migrant rhetoric in the media and in party politics in the run-up to the General Election in 2015. That is,

It would be a joint movement of all immigrant groups which would put pressure on the government...I think immigrants are generally fundamentally quite an active group. What I mean is that they are people who have made an effort to move to this country...this certainly requires being active, not passive....someone would have to start though, maybe from a petition or something...somebody...would have to feel so hard done by the situation or so uncomfortable about it in order to start...

Kasia, 38, Self-employed, Edinburgh

The Referendum has given Polish migrants in Scotland a taste of a different type of participation and what they perceive to be enhanced political rights ‘gifted’ to them by what many of them perceive to be a pro-migration Scotland (rather than being voting rights instituted by the Maastricht Treaty 1993 and the Local Government Election Regulations 1995). Their perception of these enhanced political rights seems to have developed into an appetite for continuing participation beyond the local and European Parliament level to also enjoy the political rights at ‘the politically more relevant nation-state level’ (Perchinig 2006: 68). The forms which this appetite might take could be in the form of , for example, (a) Marta and Kasia’s aspirations for the emergence of more unscribed and assertive EU migrant quasi-citizen, as depicted above, or (b) they could take other forms, including what Isin (2013) refers to as the more scripted formal citizenship processes including applications for UK citizenship, which will be explored in the next section.

Part three: Reflexive stakeholder citizenship – or trying to negotiate the uncertainty of quasi-citizenship

In many cases, enfranchisement in the Referendum increased some of our participants' sense of belonging and familiarity with Scotland and the UK, for example,

...elections in Poland don't really change things in the society; here, it's the other way round and this motivates one to vote...Perhaps it's because...I wanted to be part of the society I live in. To vote means to belong. I spend most of my time here and so I get quite emotional when it comes to voting, I feel quite emotional about this Referendum.

(Marcin, 34, Care Worker, Edinburgh)

It is through participants' justifications of their voting rights in the Referendum that we can observe how they articulate (and thus constitute) the relation between the franchise and their sense of citizenship. Thus participating in the Referendum had the effect of bolstering Marcin's sense of ownership and belonging in his adoptive land (Ho 2009: 801). Other participants took the opportunity to justify their participation in the Referendum through their contribution to Scotland and through their stake in Scotland as EU migrants (see authors, 2015). For example, 'I live here, my life is here, I pay as much tax as anyone else. We pay taxes and we should have equal rights' (Dawid, 29, Self-Employed, Edinburgh). In many ways, Dawid follows the rationalisation of citizenship in terms of what Beckman (2006) refers to as foreign national residents' contributivist view; that is, the view that it is resident's contribution in the form of taxation ect., that should determine their political rights.

Rather than just economic contribution, a number of our participants justified their participation in the Independence Referendum in terms of their multiple stakes in the future of Scotland. For example, Olek told us:

Polish people, are really thinking of staying and living here, and having our say in the history of Scotland...obviously we have our families here and our children will in fact be Scottish, so I think we should take responsibility in shaping the future, and that's why I decided to take part in the Referendum.

Olek, 34, Researcher, Edinburgh

The registers in which Polish Migrants express their stake in Scotland and the UK was mainly in terms of their sense of belonging, social embeddedness, familial investment and also economic contributions (for example, paying tax). Bauböck (2014) argues that membership in the polity depends not only on the fact of the individual having a 'genuine' link to that polity but also the nature of this link. This implies that foreign residents' lives are not only subject to the legislations and politics of their country of residence but they are also effected by the relational or horizontal aspects of citizenship (Clarke *et al* 2014: 25). In many cases our participants' emphasis on the relational or subjective aspects of belonging was presented alongside their assertions in terms of being contributors (rather than being takers) and of their respectability (in terms of being hardworking, tax and bill payers) as reflected by our participants above. However, it is the gulf between their subjective (horizontal or relational) sense of being part of the citizenry of Scotland in the run-up to the Referendum which contrasts so acutely with their disenfranchisement from the more vertical or objective conception of citizenship associated with full 'national-level' political rights. Olek, our only participant who had already become a British citizen, was also the only participant who

thought that he could reconcile both the subjective and objective aspects of his citizenship in the UK in this context:

For me citizenship is a formal confirmation of my right to stay and work here, although there are some soft aspects of this related to the way I feel and where I plan my future...so one aspect relates to psychological reassurance and peace of mind but there are also other aspects – the right to vote in the General Election being one of them....

Olek, 34, Researcher, Edinburgh

Although Olek was the only participant who had already naturalised, a number of our other participants had and were contemplating applying for UK citizenship in this context and their uncertainty about the UK's future membership of the EU. That being said, a number of our participants also suggested that naturalisation, after an appropriate period of time, should be an automatic process, gained through registration, for example, Agata suggested:

It would be worth it to extend the period of required residency to five to ten years, and after say five or ten years citizenship would be granted automatically...ten years is one seventh or one eighth of one's life, a huge chunk....in ten years' time I will have been in the UK longer than I have live in Poland.

Agata, 30, Social Worker, Edinburgh.

The trajectory of our participants stakeholdership is more complex than Bauböck's assumptions that limited (sub-national) voting rights should lead to naturalisation by application (Bauböck 2005: 686). Whereas some of our participants are resigned to what

Shaw calls ‘long-term alienage’ (2007: 74), for others naturalisation was seen as a proactive and instrumental strategy, in the context of their uncertainty about the UK’s future place in the EU, Franciszek told us in the interview before the Referendum that

I’m considering taking British citizenship, but that’s more in order to seal the fact that I’m not a stranger in this country, in order to guarantee the right to stay in case the UK left the EU and I lost that right...and because I have been here for so long, I would like to have such a guarantee...

Franciszek, male, 31, Architect, Glasgow

Some of our participants’ perceptions on naturalisations also changed over the time. For example, although Franciszek still considered naturalisation as a route to feeling more secure in the UK in the context of potential changes in EU membership as a consequence of the Scottish Independence Referendum, in the follow-up interview before the General Election his motivation for considering naturalisation had expanded to include the impact of right-wing political rhetoric. That is, Franciszek was ‘kicking himself’ for not having already applied for British citizenship, and this was described more in terms of being motivated to find his voice as a voter and secure his settlement in the UK in the context of right-wing migrant hostility in the run up to the General Election:

Yes I do kick myself for not having done it earlier...somehow it has never been a priority...but this witch-hunt driven particularly by right-wing parties pushes me to think that I should just get it done and over with....to be quite frank it’s been really getting to me. I think they’ve crossed the line.

Franciszek, 31, Architect, Glasgow

For a number of our interview participants, their enfranchisement during the Independence Referendum had given them ‘a taste’ of being what they called a ‘rightful citizen’. In Daniel’s case, he like Francisek also told us that he was also annoyed with himself for not having already applied for UK citizenship so that he could vote in the General Election. Following Bauböck’s trajectory, Daniel saw his enfranchisement during the Referendum as a natural step to applying for UK Citizenship. Daniel’s motivations for seriously considering naturalisation, are similar to other participants, for example, trying to achieve greater control and security over his destiny in the context of potential new EU migration controls and talk of the EU Exit Referendum after the General Election. However, in his narrative Daniel also developed the relationship between his potential naturalisation application and protecting his ‘stake’ in Scotland (while also articulating his philosophy of migrant integration in the host country); for example,

That’s why one needs to obtain citizenship, so that you do have a say....you have invested so much of your life here...people get quite emotional about ...the debates on immigration and leaving the EU.....With regard to citizenship, what’s important about it is that it entails rights and obligations, and many people who come here think about the rights and certain privileges, but not so much about the obligations. People who come here need to accept the reality of this country. They need to stop being passive and start to blend into this reality...

Daniel, 32, works in IT, Edinburgh

The financial costs of naturalisation was a significant issue for many of our participants. For some, naturalisation was too costly (£1000 for single adults, £1400 for couples), a lot of

‘hassle’ in terms of attending classes and sitting exams and therefore only to be considered as a last resort. Monika was opposed to applying to become a British citizen as she saw this as ‘buying voting rights’:

Right now in order for me to get a mortgage, buy a car, in order to live and participate in the life of this country...I just don’t need this citizenship....as this is all my personal priorities, everything I had wanted to achieve so far...never has the fact of not being a British citizen been an obstacle to me achieving anything.

(Monika, 30, Civil Servant, Glasgow).

Monika went on to tell us that apart from being disenfranchised from the General Election and also experiencing disadvantages in terms of obtaining visas (for some foreign travel destinations), on balance she has been and will continue to be able to live a full life in the UK without becoming a citizen. For some of our participants applying for UK citizenship was not a means of gaining the ‘protection by a particular polity’ nor was it closely associated with trying to tie the ‘individual's well-being to the common good of the polity’ (Bauböck 2005: 686). Rather it was a means of becoming even more ‘European’ and in the sense of being even more empowered to face an uncertain future through hedging their bets and applying for citizenship and thus having the benefits of holding Polish-UK dual nationality. Thus, for our participants contemplating naturalisation was less a response to the impact of contradictory institutional processes at the Scottish, UK and EU levels; and more about maintaining openness, choice and the freedom of movement so far enjoyed as an EU citizen living outside of their country of citizenship. Of all our participants Joseph articulate this instrumental commodification of naturalisation most clearly:

I would like to have the possibility of moving between Poland and the UK, and be able to work in both places. I would like to have the possibility to choose. I don't want anyone to tell me to choose one option or the other... what I really value is the possibility to move between these two places. For me it's really relevant that I have a choice. Ultimately, I feel European because I feel both Polish and a citizen of Edinburgh. Or perhaps Scotland or the United Kingdom. I feel European. For me a choice between Edinburgh or Łódź is not a big choice at all.

Joseph, 30, Post-Graduate Student, Edinburgh.

Thus, amongst our participants, there is little consensus with regard to their justifications or motivations for considering naturalisation (or not). However, we fully expect that the forthcoming UK's EU Referendum (23 June 2016) will focus our participants' attention on naturalisation in a much more direct way.

Conclusion

Our research offers what Clarke *et al* refers to as a temporally specific context for the analysis of citizenship (2014: 10 & 14). The situation in question provided a context for the observation of the recasting of citizenship in the context of complex social cultural transformations (Painter and Philo 1995: 109) through a particular focus on one aspect of citizenship, namely the political rights enjoyed by free-moving Europeans in the EU. These are: the free movement of European Union citizens; the enlargement of Europe, including the recent accessions since 2004 and the inclusion of EU migrants in an unprecedented (in established EU member states) Independence Referendum in Scotland in 2014. In this particular context our participants' franchise capacity (López-Guerra 2014: 6) was

experienced in the context of ‘fragmented’ (Perchinig 2006: 69) or ‘quasi’ (Castle and Davidson 2000: 98) citizenship, in terms of consistent access to formal political rights. These experiences gave our participants the opportunity to reflect on their variable franchise capacity in the context of being including and excluded from the electorate during these political ‘events’. The complexities and heterogeneity of Polish migrants residents’ responses to these electoral inclusions and exclusions illustrate Balibar’s understanding of citizenship as always ‘inparfaite’ (unfinished) and under construction and what Clarke et al refer to as a practice and a process, rather than a stable state (Clarke et al 2014:).

In many ways, our participants’ articulation of their frustration, impatience and confusion with regard to the inconsistencies they perceived regarding the inconsistencies between the formal-legal arrangement of their citizenship status as EU free movers was the means through which they disputed and pushed at the boundaries of the legal-formal composition of citizenship that in their experience did not accommodate their situation. It is also in participants’ articulations of their frustration, confusion and impatience that we observed an emergent desire for a new type of migrant politics mobilised around the tensions (around voting rights) that EU mobility brings and their desire for EU migrants to be more assertive to counter some of the anti-migration discourse evident during the General Election. What we have observed in this particular context is the emergence of a more assertive EU migrant sense of stakeholder citizenship which is characterised by a willingness to participate in ‘their hosts’ political and collective affairs (Martiniello 2006: 83) rather than only having ‘an economic role in the host society’ (ibid). What this small-scale study exposes is the impact on our participants of having quasi-citizenship electoral rights in this particular context. This has exposed for analysis their justification for participating in the Referendum (and their frustration at being disenfranchised from the General Election) in terms of them being

stakeholder contributors. In terms of naturalisation, only one participant viewed this process as a means of reconciling the institutional contradictions they experienced as ‘citizens’ in Scotland, the UK and the EU. For some participants naturalisation was contemplated as a means (as an enfranchised General Election voter in the future) of countering some of the anti-EU migration rhetoric they experienced during the General Election. However, our research shows little consensus with regard to our participants’ justifications or motivations in terms of considering naturalisation (or not). For example, naturalisation, if contemplated, was either as an instrumental means to maintain their choice of where in the EU they want to reside, but for others this was clearly articulated in terms of both security (in the face of EU membership uncertainty) and having a say as ‘rightful citizens’.

It was through the process of engaging with and participating in the Scottish Independence Referendum that our participants articulated key aspects of the process of constituting their sense of citizenship(s). What this study exposes is the different ways that this particular group of migrants articulate and respond to their experiences of what they view to be inconsistent political participation rights in the context of intra-EU migration. Furthermore, what this temporally specific context reveals for analysis is that the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion continue to generate dramatic asymmetries and create openings and closures (Balibar 2015: 76) amongst intra-EU migrants who live outside of their country of citizenship. In this context some privileges and prohibitions are abolished yet some other privileges and prohibitions remain. It is in this context that the imperfect, incomplete and always unfinished aspects of citizenship, in this case, citizenship as pertaining to political rights, as a practice and a process can be observed. The experiences of disenfranchisement will be extended for EU migrants in the UK (who are not naturalised UK citizens) in the context of the UK’s EU Referendum. As this is national level referendum, EU migrants are not allowed to vote.

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